

Introducing the Rising Powers Diplomatic Network (RPDN): A Dataset for Rising Powers' Presidential Diplomacy and Diplomatic Presence Abroad

Mesquita, Rafael

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Article

Introducing the Rising Powers Diplomatic Network (RPDN): A Dataset for Rising Powers' Presidential Diplomacy and Diplomatic Presence Abroad

Rafael Mesquita

Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE), German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA)

rafaelmesquita_5688@hotmail.com

Abstract

This article introduces the Rising Powers Diplomatic Network (RPDN) dataset, which monitors the distribution of the diplomatic apparatus of emerging powers across the globe. RPDN's release version contains data on two countries, Brazil and Turkey, covering mainly the 1995–2015 timespan, thus providing a comprehensive portrait of the evolution of their diplomatic capacity and patterns of interstate interactions. Specifically, RPDN contains information on two items: presidential diplomacy (i.e.: number of official visits) and diplomatic presence (number and size of diplomatic representations abroad). Data for Turkey also list visits by the prime minister in addition to the president's. Data for Brazil also report: size of staff at each diplomatic post, post ranking/grade and number of military attachés abroad. The article concludes demonstrating RPDN's applicability, by addressing a central question in the regional powers literature: do regional powers emphasize their regions in their diplomacy in comparison to other destinations? It is expected that this dataset makes a contribution to quantitative research on rising powers and their diplomacy.

Keywords

RPDN, Brazil, Turkey, Foreign Policy, Rising Powers

Introduction

This article introduces the dataset “Rising Powers Diplomatic Network” (RPDN, available at <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/5FISNQ>) and displays its main features. RPDN contains data on the distribution of the diplomatic assets of emerging powers over time. Specifically, the release version brings data on Brazilian

and Turkish presidential diplomacy (i.e.: official visits by the head of state or government) and diplomatic presence (scope and size of diplomatic representations abroad), covering mainly the 1995-2015 time period.

The overarching goal behind RPDN is to allow for better empirical analyses of emerging countries' international behavior. As with other policy domains, diplomacy is one of the fields for which data are abundant for developed nations, but scarce elsewhere. Consequently, scholarship has been constrained on the variety of research it is able to conduct regarding emerging powers, as well as on the generality of its findings. Even research agendas that have developed around and focused intensively on such countries have suffered from this underprovision. The regional powers research agenda, for instance, has produced significant insight on features of regional powers as analytical concepts and a wealth of in-depth analyses, but has struggled to cumulate its findings and test its theoretical predicates beyond the confines of single case studies.

RPDN is an initial attempt to bridge that gap, since it provides original quantitative data on two countries that have captured much academic attention in the past two decades. We hope that this dataset can make a valuable contribution to scholarship focused on the empirical analysis of emerging powers' diplomacy.

The purpose of the current article is threefold. Firstly, to expound the motivation underpinning the creation of RPDN and its expected scholarly contribution. Secondly, to present RPDN, its variables, scope, main features, and to describe the data-gathering procedures adopted. Lastly, the article exemplifies RPDN in usage, showing how its data can be valuable for a solid, empirically grounded understanding of the international behavior of emerging powers. In particular, we will address one of the lingering questions in the literature on regional powers, namely, whether or not regional powers emphasize their regions in their diplomacy in comparison to other destinations. These three points are also the structure of this article.

Motivation and Expected Contribution to Scholarship

The main motivation behind RPDN is to allow for thorough quantitative study of emerging powers in International Relations (IR). In particular, it seeks to advance available knowledge on the matter of diplomacy.

Diplomatic activity is one of the enduring fields of interest in IR and it has been approached from varied angles. Traditional diplomacy and its more recent presidential variant have been analyzed as both dependent and independent variables. The former type of research design focuses on uncovering the determinants of state visits (Lebovic & Saunders 2016), while the latter attempts to gauge the

independent effect of high-level trips on matters such as trade (Nitsch 2007) and public opinion (Goldsmith & Horiuchi 2009).

In general, the literature accepts that state visits are a manifestation of a country's preferences and interests in the global arena. Most of the aforementioned research, however, shares a shortcoming: it is restricted to the US and Europe. Investigations of this nature on less developed states have been hitherto scant due to a number of factors, most notably the difficulty in finding reliable longitudinal data.

Diplomatic networks, in turn, are also an established object of research. Since Singer and Small's (1966) seminal work, the type and ranking of diplomatic representation established between dyads of countries have been utilized as indicators of varied concepts.¹ Scholarship on international status has regarded representation as a proxy for a country's standing in the international community (Neumayer 2008; Kinne 2014), while research on international political economy models the number of embassies and consulates as a trade-promoting factor (Moons & van Bergeijk 2017). These studies tend to be more global in scope, as typical panels will have data on all sovereign states for a given year. Though this allows for comparison across a greater number of units, including emerging countries, longitudinal data remain rare, thus restricting comparisons over time.

In light of the aforementioned, it is visible that there is an information gap when it comes to developing nations. Academia and other observers have repeatedly stressed the growing relevance of emerging countries and regional powers² in our increasingly multipolar reality, and yet efforts on gathering systematic information for such states still lag behind considerably. Lall (2016, p.415) argues that the abundance of data on developed states, in contrast to the scarcity for the rest of the world, leads many studies in IR and comparative political science to suffer from an "advanced democracy bias", i.e.: the majority of cases tested comes from the Western world, thus compromising the potential for generalization of such research. This skewness is not purely on the demand side, that is, solely to blame on any particular type of academic neglect; rather, it is often a supply issue. Less developed countries also tend to lack the administrative and budgetary capacity to systematically harness information (Jerven 2016, pp.345–346). Not to mention, they might also be prone to have less transparent governments, as gathering and

¹ Noteworthy efforts to update and expand Singer and Small's approach include the works of Bayer (2006) and the Lowy Institute ('Global Diplomacy Index' 2017).

² The conceptual distinction between middle powers, regional powers, rising or emerging powers is not the central concern of this article, so that it will not be explored in detail. For the sake of expedience, a useful heuristic to distinguish between concepts can be found in the G20 and the BRICS. While the G20 can be considered a grouping of the foremost rising or emerging powers (excluding the G8 members also present), the BRICS bloc is normally considered to be a sample of typical regional powers. For more on the difference between concepts, see Paes et al. (2017).

publicizing data can have political – besides economic – costs. Thus, the availability and consistency of data for developing states has been an enduring issue, imposing limitations on the type of research that it is possible to conduct on such locations. Foreign policy is one of such areas for which information abounds for advanced democracies, but becomes rarer as we move away from the core Western states.

RPDN monitors Brazilian and Turkish diplomacy over an extended timespan. This is relevant in that it will provide a full picture of the evolutionary dynamics of their external affairs, as well as point out where these countries have been investing their diplomatic assets. For some of the metrics concerned, RPDN is the first resource to present longitudinal primary data. Thus, it fills an important gap, as it monitors the diplomatic activity of emerging countries for approximately two decades. Greater attention to the behavior of actors from the Global South has been long due, and an inquiry into which partners concentrate more diplomatic effort on the part of Brazil and Turkey can produce unprecedented evidence on the shifting landscape of international polarity.

A second matter which underscores the academic importance of RPDN relates to the trajectory of emerging and regional powers as a field of study. For more than a decade, the topic has received intense scholarly and policy attention. Based on the literature trends, it can be argued that this domain has advanced from an initial moment more oriented towards interpretation to another stage, where tests and validation become more relevant. The early articles on the theme started off from the limitations of established theories (especially middle-powermanship and regionalism) in explaining the behavior of emerging countries and attempted to propose new categories (Hurrell 2006; Jordaan 2003; Schoeman 2000; Soares De Lima & Hirst 2006). In the following years, there was effort towards theoretical consolidation, focused on crafting generalizable typologies (Destradi 2010; Nolte 2010; Prys 2010). Recently, applications of these typologies and their theoretical corollaries to different cases have proliferated, as researchers try to confirm or adjust the theoretical predicates. In particular, there has been an interest in broadening the conceptual space, through studies of countries that have traditionally not been considered as emerging or regional powers (Alden & Le Pere 2009; Burges 2015; Dal 2016; Flemes 2010; Godehardt & Nabers 2011; Malamud & Rodriguez 2013).

Throughout this trajectory, qualitative analyses, particularly single case studies or few-cases comparison, have been the preferred templates. The prevalence of small N studies yields an important consequence with regards to the development of the field. Many of the hypotheses and theoretical arguments produced to date have limited inferential scope, as they have only been elaborated and tested to a small number of cases and have not yet been verified across a larger number of

observations (Flemes & Nolte 2010).

Also due to this qualitative predominance, the diplomacy of rising powers has often been scrutinized by emphasizing some noteworthy episodes in the realm of high politics, such as mediation efforts, crisis management, or vicinal tensions, which creates problems of representativeness and rarity. A large N dataset such as RPDN is a significant contribution to the field, as it offers the possibility of testing various theoretical arguments developed so far against a vast population of cases, not depending exclusively on dramatic episodes of regional policy.

Having explained the main motivation of RPDN, as well as the contribution we expect this dataset brings to the field, we shall now unveil the actual data.

Description of RPDN

For each country included in the RPDN, two specific domains of diplomatic activity are recorded: (1) presidential diplomacy and (2) diplomatic presence. The former is presented in a single dataset, while the latter is broken down into two datasets, one per level of aggregation. As the release version of RPDN covers Brazil and Turkey, it has a total of six individual datasets. Below, we explain each set.

Presidential Diplomacy Data

The concentration of diplomatic activity in the hands of the country's leader is a typical trait of modern interstate interactions. It has been increasingly common that heads of state and/or government, instead of professional diplomats alone, take up the role of foremost representatives of their countries abroad (Cason & Power 2009; Rojas & Milet 1999). Emerging powers have also relied on this practice in their attempts to project influence. Some authors attribute part of those countries relative success in punching above their weight internationally to the direct engagement of their leaders in international affairs (Özcan, Köse & Karakoç 2015; Rouquié 2006), while others emphasize how the presidents' institutional powers are key in maintaining certain interstate arrangements operational (Malamud 2005; Mace et al. 2016).

Presidential diplomacy is normally measured via direct gestures from the head of state/government in interstate relations. From the range of possible actions, the state visit has become the privileged indicator for gauging how active a president is internationally, and which partners and venues it values the most (Goldstein 2008).

With that in mind, the measuring of Brazilian presidential diplomacy is straightforward: as the country has a presidential regime (i.e.: the president is both head of state and government), we only need to track the displacements of a single individual. Additionally, Brazilian presidents take office right on January 1st of the

year following their election. It is thus simple to classify Brazil's foreign policy in different moments, according to the president and his/her term, and aggregating the results yearly. Presidencies covered by the RPDN include those of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1st term: 1995-1998, 2nd: 1999-2002), Luis Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2006, 2007-2010) and Dilma Rousseff (2011-2014, 2015).

The same does not apply to the Turkish case, which, for the period considered, had both a prime-minister (henceforth "PM") and a president. Between 2000 and 2015 (which is the data range for Turkey, as it will be explained in the next topic), Ankara had three presidents and four PMs, as summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Timeline of Turkish presidents and PMs (2000-2015)

Year	President	Time Period	PM	Time Period
2000	Ahmet Necdet Sezer (independent)	From 16/05/2000 to 28/08/2007	Bülent Ecevit (DSP, coalition with MHP-ANAP)	From 11/01/1999 to 18/11/2002
2001				
2002				
2003			Abdullah Gül (AKP)	From 18/11/2002 to 14/03/2003
2004				
2005	Abdullah Gül (AKP)	From 28/08/2007 to 28/08/2014	Recep Tayyip Erdogan (AKP)	From 14/03/2003 to 28/08/2014
2006				
2007				
2008				
2009				
2010				
2011				
2012				
2013				
2014				
2015	Recep Tayyip Erdogan (AKP)	From 28/08/2014	Ahmet Davutoğlu (AKP)	From 28/08/2014 to 24/05/2016

Source: Elaborated by the author.

In fact, the terms held by the president and the PM are not synchronic and have at times been occupied by different parties, which complicates periodization. For this article, the successive PM cabinets were adopted as the standard time references, as it is usually done in the empiricist literature (cf. Çakır & Akdağ 2017). During the analyzed period, there were three general elections: November 2002, July 2007 and June 2011.³ In such occasions, a new cabinet was formed, led by

³ In 2015 there were two elections to compose a new parliament. The first one took place in June and, as it led to a hung parliament, another one was held in November. The results of the November 2015 election are not taken into consideration for our periodization since they are considered only to take effect in 2016 (according to the categorization rule adopted for RPDN) and thus escape the period

the PM. Thus, the interval between 2000 and 2015 can be divided into four distinct governments: one cabinet under the DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition (2000-2002), and three others under the AKP (2003-2007, 2008-2011 and 2012-2015). It should be noted that, by adopting this periodization, there will be terms when either the president (Gül - Erdogan in 2015) or the PM (Gül - Erdogan in 2003, Erdogan - Davutoğlu in 2015) were replaced during the same administration.

Another difference with regards to Brazil is that the onset of new governments in Turkey is not synchronic with calendar years, as new cabinets might take office in the middle of a given year. As this article uses years as the base interval of analysis, it is necessary to devise a solution to allocate governmental changes that occur during a regular calendar year. For ease of periodization, changes in Turkish government taking place in the second semester of a given year are coded as taking effect in the following year. This procedure is necessary due to our interest in yearly data. Researchers working on a different unit scale might feel no need for such adjustments and preserve the precise dates of cabinet changes.

Table 2 presents the main variables of substantive interest in the presidential diplomacy datasets for Brazil and Turkey.⁴

Table 2: Main variables of substantive interest in the RPDN Presidential Diplomacy datasets

Variable Name	Description	Type	Brazil Value Range	Turkey Value Range
dest_type	Destination type. Five possible values	Categorical	"STATE": Destination is a State; "IO": Destination is an International Organization; "RO": Destination is a Regional Organization; "RRO": Destination is a Region-Region Organization; "RSO": Destination is a Region-State Organization	"STATE"; "IO"; "RO"; "RRO"; "RSO"
dest_name	Name of destination	Categorical	127 unique countries and organizations recorded	146 unique countries and organizations recorded
n_days	Length of visit in number of days (when reported). Counting of days starts at 1 (if return on the same day), so that count = 2 if return is the on the following day, and so forth. Variable applicable only to dest_type = STATE (NA if other)	Discrete	NA; 1 - 8	NA; 1 - 10

of interest.

⁴ Identification variables, such as ISO codes, were omitted from the table; refer to codebook for full list of variables.

Variable Name	Description	Type	Brazil Value Range	Turkey Value Range
multi	Dummy variable for multilateral events. Equals 0 when purpose of travel to foreign state is bilateral visit and 1 when it is a multilateral event. Variable applicable only to dest_type = STATE (NA if other)	Categorical	NA; 0; 1	NA; 0; 1
TOTAL NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS			626	687

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Data-gathering process

Brazil

RPDN counts official visits abroad by Brazilian presidents from 1995 to 2015. The data were collected from the lists made available by the Library of the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil.⁵ Additional information was gathered from media reports and from the webpage of one of the former president's personal foundation.⁶ To assemble the base, all official visits to foreign countries were counted, including those to attend summits and multilateral events. Neither receptions of foreign representatives in Brazil, nor international events based in the country were computed, since the records of such events were not kept consistently over the years for all the lists consulted.

Turkey

The original ambition with RPDN was to collect information from the 1990s to the 2010s for both Brazil and Turkey. Empirical difficulties, however, made it necessary to moderate this aim, reducing both the temporal extension and the number of observed indicators for Turkish diplomacy.

As mentioned, Ankara differs from Brasilia in its form of government. For the period studied, the Turkish system was parliamentary. Thus, the country presented both a president (head of state) and a PM (head of government). This institutional configuration was only amended by the constitutional referendum of April 16, 2017, which abolished the post of PM and established a fully presidential regime. As the studied interval ends in 2015, this change is not taken into account, so that Turkey has, during the period considered, both a president and a PM.

⁵ Available at: <<http://www.biblioteca.presidencia.gov.br/presidencia/ex-presidentes>>. Accessed on 08-07-2018

⁶ Instituto FHC. List of travels by former president Fernando Henrique Cardoso available at: <http://acervo.ifhc.org.br/ModuloPesquisador/jsp/doctosApoio/8/viagens_1995_2002_alfa.pdf>. Accessed on 05-01-2019

It is a matter of debate in the literature whether it is the president or the PM who exerts more influence in foreign policy (Robins 2003; Gumuscu 2016). Indeed, the relationship between the two seems to be variable and contingent. For the period under review, both figures can be seen performing similar duties: representing Turkey in summits and multilateral events, hosting visiting heads of state and leading mediation initiatives. It is, therefore, difficult to discern whether each actor has its own jurisdiction in the international arena, or if both act concurrently and in equal capacity. This apparent equivalence implies that focusing on only one of the two representatives may be misleading, since it would omit the gestures of another equally important agent.

Therefore, in order to avoid a partial depiction of Turkish diplomacy, RPDN presents the metrics of presidential diplomacy for both the president and the PM. The term employed remains “presidential diplomacy”, though no longer restricted to the head of state alone. Official travel data were collected from various sources: the official websites of the Presidency⁷ and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)⁸, the personal webpage of one of the former presidents⁹, several news sites, official government press¹⁰, and other miscellaneous sources.

Limits were set by data availability. It was possible to collect data with sufficient reliability from the year 2000 to 2015. Errors and omissions are nonetheless still possible, particular for the early years, since information on displacements is not systematized in a single standardized source throughout the period.

Diplomatic Presence Data

RPDN monitors the geographic distribution of diplomatic capacities of the Brazilian and Turkish foreign relations ministries. We term this allocation “diplomatic presence”, as it represents a way to gauge where do emerging power choose to be more present. Such diplomatic investment can be weighted and compared in different forms. In RPDN, we understand that it relates to the size or complexity of the diplomatic mission in each country. That is, it can be assumed that a larger mission in a given host country (i.e.: more stations and posts, as well as personnel) means greater presence, and this in turn is a token of how highly this country is regarded in the foreign relations of the emerging power.¹¹

⁷ Website of the Presidency of the Turkish Republic: www.tcgb.gov.tr. Accessed on 22-07-2018

⁸ Turkish MFA website: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/>. Accessed on 22-07-2018. Note that, though the Ministry's official name in Turkish is “Dışişleri Bakanlığı”, it regularly uses the English translation “Ministry of Foreign Affairs” in its international publications, so that the acronym “MFA” is utilized in this article as well.

⁹ Personal website of former president Abdullah Gül: www.abdullahgul.gen.tr. Accessed on 22-07-2018

¹⁰ The Official Gazette of the Republic of Turkey (“T. C. Remis Gazete”) reports absences from the head of state due to official visits abroad. Available at www.resmigazete.gov.tr. Accessed on 22-07-2018

¹¹ For an overview of the theoretical arguments linking the choice of where to open diplomatic rep-

The assessment of Brazilian and Turkish diplomatic presence abroad relies on official data on consular activity published by each country's ministry. As this information is not uniformly registered and publicized by each country, the amount of indicators we are able to utilize in RPDN varies from case to case.

For Brazil, we were able to collect data from 1995 to 2015. A total of four variables were monitored: the number and type of official representations abroad, the number of employees in these posts, hierarchical ranking of each post, and the number of military attachés abroad. For Turkey, in turn, fewer empirical indicators were available. We could only compute the number and type of official representations abroad, albeit for a longer time period (1995 to 2017).

Diplomatic presence data are available on two levels of aggregation: city and country. The first dataset presents diplomatic posts and related variables per city, while the latter aggregates the city data into national level. For Brazil, some variables are exclusive to the level of aggregation: post ranking is only available on city level (as this cannot be aggregated nationally), and number of military attachés only on country level (as it cannot be disaggregated into cities).

Tables 3 and 4 present the substantive variables of the diplomatic presence datasets on the city and country levels of aggregation, respectively. As the city-level data records some information on different levels, a column for "level of observation" is added to Table 3 so as to distinguish between values pertaining to cities (level 1) and countries (level 2).

Table 3: Main variables of substantive interest in the RPDN Diplomatic Presence datasets (city level)

Variable name	Description	Level of obs.	Type	Brazil Value Range	Turkey Value Range
host_city	Name of the city hosting the diplomatic post	1	Categorical	209 unique names	222 unique names
host_type	Type of host. Three possible values:	2	Categorical	"STATE"; "IO"; "RO"	"STATE"; "IO"
host_name	Name of country/organization hosting the diplomatic post	2	Categorical	152 unique names	145 unique names
post_type	Type of diplomatic post. Six possible values:	1	Categorical	"EM": Embassy; "CG": Consulate General; "C": Consulate; "VC": Vice-Consulate; "OF": Office (commercial, representation, liaison) "DE": Delegation (for IO and RO only)	"EM"; "CG"; "DE"

representations and a country's strategic preferences, refer to Singer and Small (1966), Neumayer (2008) and Kinne (2014).

Variable name	Description	Level of obs.	Type	Brazil Value Range	Turkey Value Range
post_pers	Number of personnel stationed at the diplomatic post	1	Discrete	0 – 51	(Variable not available)
post_rank	Ranking of the diplomatic post. Four possible values: A, B, C, D. Rankings only appear on the consulted MRE lists from 1997 on. Ranking range was broadened from A-C to A-D in 2007.	1	Ordinal	A – C (until 2006); A – D (from 2007 on)	(Variable not available)
imp	Dummy variable for missing data imputation. Equals 0 if data is original, 1 if imputation was applied. Linear interpolation and repetition of preceding value were the adopted approaches.	1	Categorical	1; 0	(Variable not available)
TOTAL NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS				4022	4263

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Table 4: Main variables of substantive interest in the RPDN Diplomatic Presence datasets (country level)

Variable name	Description	Type	Brazil Value Range	Turkey Value Range
host_name	Name of country/organization hosting the diplomatic post	Categorical	152 unique names	145 unique names
host_type	Type of host. Three possible values:	Categorical	“STATE”; “IO”; “RO”	“STATE”; “IO”
n_pers	Total number of personnel stationed in host country/organization	Discrete	0 – 206	(Variable not available)
n_posts	Total number of diplomatic posts in host country/organization, combining embassies and other stations	Discrete	1 – 12	1 – 14
n_mil_at	Total number of military attachés stationed in host country. Count adds military attachés, deputy officers and assistants	Discrete	0 – 12	(Variable not available)
imp	Dummy variable for missing data imputation. Equals 0 if data is original, 1 if imputation was applied. Linear interpolation and repetition of preceding value were the adopted approaches.	Categorical	1; 0	(Variable not available)
TOTAL NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS			2464	2773

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Data-gathering process

Brazil

Information on Brazilian representations was obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Relations (“*Ministério das Relações Exteriores*”, MRE, also known as Itama-

raty). Specifically, from the personnel lists published semi-annually, which were retrieved via *in situ* research in August 2016 by the author in the Azeredo da Silveira Library in the ministry, where print copies are kept.

The lists contain information on the number and type of posts abroad, their ranking, and how many employees work in each one of them. They do not report the vacant positions or the expected capacity of each post. Instead, they present solely how many employees are actually working on site.¹² Records were not available for the whole period of interest: there was no list for the year 2005, so that imputation was required to complete the dataset.

The number of military attachés was not available in the lists, since the matter is handled by the Ministry of Defense. Thus, we analyzed a collection of presidential decrees (“*decretos presidenciais*”), issued between 1994 and 2015, determining how many attachés, deputy officers and auxiliaries should be allocated abroad.¹³ The quantities do not necessarily change every year. It was common to find an interval of two to three years between the publication of new decrees updating the count. It was considered that the number of attachés remains unchanged until modified by a subsequent decree. Also, as the decrees do not specify the city of the posting, this information could only be presented at the national level.

Combining information from Itamaraty and presidential decrees comes at a cost. While the Itamaraty lists are administrative reports and therefore inform how many people are actually at each post, presidential decrees are legislation, establishing how many attachés *should be* in each country, with no reference as to whether they are actually there. Thus, it must be borne in mind that while the “number of diplomatic personnel” indicator refers to the actual staff count, the “number of military attachés” indicator shows the existing positions, occupied or not. It is expected, therefore, that the count of military attachés may be slightly inaccurate and perhaps upwardly biased.

Turkey

Data availability was smaller for Turkey than it was for Brazil. Therefore, its measurement of diplomatic presence had to be operationalized with less indicators. Only information on the number and type of posts abroad was gathered. The data were provided by the MFA itself, upon request by the author. The spread-

¹² Thus, it is not possible to know, for instance, if a post listing nine employees should have precisely nine people or, instead, ten, but one of the positions was still not filled.

¹³ DECRETO Nº 1.299, DE 31 DE OUTUBRO DE 1994; DECRETO Nº 2.098, DE 18 DE DEZEMBRO DE 1996; DECRETO Nº 2.583, DE 12 DE MAIO DE 1998; DECRETO Nº 3.397, DE 30 DE MARÇO DE 2000; DECRETO Nº 5.294 DE 1º DE DEZEMBRO DE 2004; DECRETO Nº 6.773, DE 18 DE FEVEREIRO DE 2009; DECRETO Nº 7.848, DE 23 DE NOVEMBRO DE 2012; DECRETO Nº 8.125, DE 21 DE OUTUBRO DE 2013; DECRETO Nº 8.460, DE 26 DE MAIO DE 2015. Available at: <<http://www.planalto.gov.br>>. Accessed on: 29-07-2017

sheet provided by the ministry contained the opening years for all embassies and consulates. By reporting only opening dates, the spreadsheet is useful to indicate the cumulative total of posts that each country comes to host over time. However, it does not contain information on the closure of stations or other forms of diplomatic retraction. For this reason, the data may have an upward bias, since information on reductions is suppressed.

Example of Usage: Assessing Regional Diplomatic Attention

The data in RPDN can be useful in various academic ventures. In this section, we try to briefly point out – by no means exhaustively – some of the information that can be extracted from it and types of research problems that it can answer. In particular, RPDN data will be utilized to address one of the main research questions which has been lingering on the regional powers literature. Namely, do regional powers effectively prioritize their regions in their diplomatic efforts? Or do they invest greater diplomatic attention elsewhere?

One of the core assumptions of the research agenda on regional powers was that these actors displayed significant levels of regional influence and engagement (Nolte 2010; Flandes & Nolte 2010). Such prioritization, however, was largely assumed instead of verified consistently. In fact, regional powers might have incentives to remain detached from vicinal matters and pursue their aims elsewhere (Prys 2010; Hurrell 2010). The ambiguous readings on Brazilian and Turkish regionalism testify to this indeterminacy.

Regarding Brazil, scholarship is not consensual on the region's centrality. It is acknowledged that since the 1990s Brazil has acted as a region-shaper and outlined South America as its preferred area of influence – as opposed to the more diffuse space of “Latin America” (Mesquita 2016; Rocha, Albuquerque & Medeiros 2018). Ambitious regional integration and cooperation initiatives, such as Mercosur in the 1990s and Unasur in the 2000s, were signs of Brasilia's willingness. Yet, some authors emphasize that, even though Brazil mobilizes regionalist efforts, it considers them as means to an end. In other words, the region is a stepping stone for consolidating greater influence at the global stage (Lazarou & Luciano 2015; Burges 2015; Krapohl, Meissner & Muntschick 2014; Malamud & Rodriguez 2013; Steiner, Medeiros & Lima 2014). Pinheiro and Gaio (2014), in contrast, stress that Brasilia's South American regionalism, particularly during the Lula da Silva administration, did not adopt an instrumental approach towards its neighbors and that the country eventually secured a role as a regional developmental leader.

Turkey, in turn, has been long-regarded as the archetypical “torn country” (Huntington 1993) or “cusp state” (Herzog & Robins 2014), straddling between East

and West. Hence, the matter of regional belonging has been a persistent Anatolian riddle. If we restrict our focus to recent scholarship, two grand narratives are underscored: Westernization and Middle-Easternization. Joining the community of Western states has been a stable and enduring foreign policy goal in Ankara (Hale 2000; Yilmaz & Bilgin 2006; Robins 2003). The most recent and momentous episode of this saga was the EU accession bid in the early-2000s, which dominated much of the country's foreign agenda in the beginning of decade. However, with the rise of the Islamist AKP to power in 2003, in addition to the disheartening and sluggish pace of the accession negotiations, analysts detected a gradual diplomatic shift. Turkey began to reduce its emphasis on Brussels and turn towards the Arab world, which led many to diagnose a "Middle-Easternization" of foreign relations (Altunışık 2014). Early analyses of this reorientation tended to consider it a pragmatic adjustment and by no means a rupture with the West (Oğuzlu 2008), but as time went by a growing number of scholars evaluated that Turkey was departing from the liberal order and adopting the style of political Islam current in its Arab neighborhood (Öniş 2013; Arda 2015). Indeed, over the course of the AKP governments, Ankara sought to play a greater role in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, at first discretely, in an attempt to reverse the negative regional legacy previous administrations had left, and then more daringly, even seeking to consolidate Turkey as a role-model for a post-Arab Spring MENA (Oğuzlu 2016).

Hence, it can be said that the literature on both cases has struggled to address analogous questions. How important is South America in Brazil's diplomatic activity? How robust was Turkey's diplomatic shift away from Europe and towards the MENA? Though there have been some inventive attempts to gauge diplomatic attention devoted to regions,¹⁴ there has been no standard approach to measure diplomatic activity across countries. Thus, much of the evidence on diplomatic preferences remains incommensurable.

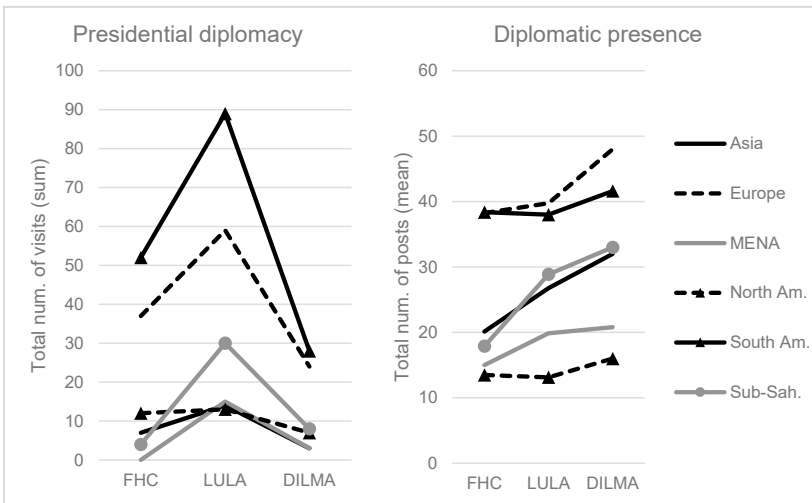
RPDN allows us to address the issue in a novel way by looking into presidential diplomacy and diplomatic presence. Both concepts refer to enduring practices, which are embedded in the underlying structure of modern statehood and therefore have come to acquire stable meaning and significance for nearly all countries (Goldstein 2008; Kinne 2014). In other words, they are valid indicators of diplomatic attention across several cases. In addition, both measures combined provide a clearer picture of a country's diplomacy, as the presidential component is expected to capture a more dynamic and volitional vector, while the diplomatic presence should reflect deeper structural interests.

By grouping all countries listed in RPDN according to their geographic and po-

¹⁴ See for instance Jenne et al. (2017) and Çakir and Akdağ (2017).

litical regions and then aggregating the total amount of state visits received and diplomatic posts,¹⁵ we are able to see which regions received a larger share of diplomatic attention. Figures 1 and 2 below show the results for Brazil and Turkey, respectively. To ensure visual clarity, values were aggregated per president or cabinet, as opposed to years, and regions which were not highlighted by the literature as relevant within this *problématique* were omitted.

Figure 1: Brazilian presidential diplomacy and diplomatic presence for selected regions (1995–2015)^{16, 17}



Source: Elaborated by the author.

Figure 1 shows that South America (black solid line with triangular marker) has consistently attracted most of Brazil's diplomatic activity. During the whole period considered, it was the first destination in terms of visits and second in number of diplomatic posts. Though this is evidence in favor of South America's priority, it is noteworthy that the region's centrality has actually decreased in rela-

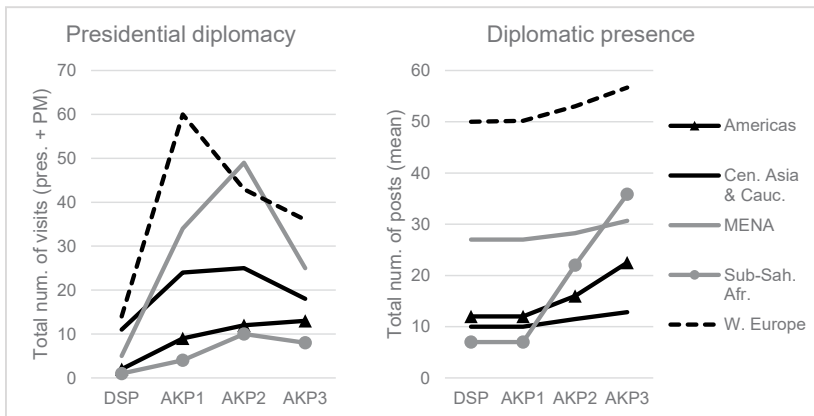
¹⁵ We chose to restrict the concept of diplomatic presence to just one indicator (i.e.: number of posts) in this example since some of our complementary indicators in this dataset (e.g.: number of personnel and military attachés) are not available for both Brazil and Turkey.

¹⁶ Diplomatic representations on international organizations (e.g.: stations in Geneva referring to the UN instead of the Swiss government) were not counted. Total number of official visits is equal to the sum of visits to countries within a region during a president's office. Total number of posts is equal to the sum, for all countries in a region, of the mean number of posts a country had during an office. Countries were ascribed to specific regions based on geographical classifications utilized by each country's Ministry of Foreign Relations. Regional classifications are not included originally in RPDN as future users might have diverging views on the borders of a given region. Data for Brazil in 2005 is imputed.

¹⁷ South America comprises the following countries and territories: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, French Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela.

tive terms. While in Fernando Henrique Cardoso's presidency South America concentrated 43% of Brazilian visits and 24% of its stations, these figures would drop to 35% and 19% in the Dilma Rousseff years. It is clear that, from the Lula da Silva presidency onwards, Brazil's international relations became much more globalized. Though this increased activity also generated more frequent visits to and more posts in South America, a growing regional detachment and diplomatic diversification were also implied.

Figure 2: Turkish presidential diplomacy and diplomatic presence for selected regions (2000-2015)¹⁸



Source: elaborated by the author.

Figure 2 reveals that Turkey's diplomatic shifts were much more pronounced in the presidential domain. Visits to Western Europe (dashed black line) peaked during AKP's first term, precisely when EU accession talks began, which reflects the high degree of personal engagement of the Turkish president and PM on the matter. However, right on the following AKP government (2003-2007), the MENA region (grey solid line) surpassed Western Europe and became the principal destination. This emphasis, however, would be ultimately short-lived. As the Arab spring convulsed the MENA and AKP's third cabinet experienced grave backlashes in its regional leadership attempts, the number of visits receded promptly. Though this could lead us to believe that Ankara's Middle-Easternization was strong and swift, the data on diplomatic presence nuance this reading, as they indicate that Turkey's consular network in the MENA remained mostly stable. Western Europe was the undisputed first place in number of stations throughout. Notably, Germany occupied a *sui generis* position, hosting as much

¹⁸ The MENA comprises the following countries and territories: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, UAE, Yemen, Palestine.

as 14 stations, while other top-tier counterparts (US, France, Greece), would not surpass 5 stations each. This exceedingly dense consular base reflects the strong interdependence between Turkey and Germany in terms of trade, investment and expatriate community (İçduygu 2012).

By comparing both cases, it is visible that Brazil devoted a higher level of diplomatic attention to its immediate region. South America concentrated the largest portion of Brasilia's diplomatic resources, albeit this margin diminished in relative terms with each passing year. The MENA, by comparison, was vigorously prioritized by Turkey for a period, but this emphasis was more pronounced in presidential diplomacy and rather brief. Turkish diplomatic presence remained strong in Western Europe throughout.

It is noteworthy that Brazilian regionalism has clearer institutional underpinnings, with established regional groupings and accompanying demand for presidential summits and bureaucracy (Medeiros, Lima & Cabral 2016). Though the main goal of this article is not to establish causality, it would be possible to argue that this institutionalization might explain why Brazil's diplomatic commitment towards South America was more stable, while Turkey's connection with the MENA seemed more mercurial. In addition, it is also visible that both countries finished the series with a much more diversified diplomatic portfolio than in the beginning.

Beyond the matter of regional centrality, other curious findings are also revealed by the data. Both Brazil and Turkey underwent a synchronic expansion in their diplomatic presence. They increased rapidly the number of embassies and consulates between 2007 and 2012, in a pace not repeated before or after in the series. Nearly all regions received greater consular attention as a result, though the same hierarchy tends to be preserved. The main exception for both cases was Sub-Saharan Africa (solid grey line with circle marker), which moved higher up in the ladder.

For Brazil, Sub-Saharan Africa had, in the early 2000s, roughly the same amount of diplomatic posts as the MENA, and slightly less than Asia. From 2005 on, Sub-Saharan Africa surpassed Asia and it remained the third region with most posts until the last recorded year (2015). In the course of those ten years, 18 new posts were opened in the continent, more than in any other region, apart from the Americas.

This rise is more impressive for Turkey. Sub-Saharan Africa went from merely 7 posts in the beginning of the series to 36 in the end. In all cases, the new posts were the first Turkish embassies opened in those countries. The only exception was Somalia, which received an embassy and a consulate general. Hence, though

the literature has placed great emphasis on the Middle-Easternization of Turkish diplomacy, we can see that the data show concurrently an intriguing Africanization. From 64 new posts opened between 2007 and 2015, only 9 were in the MENA, while 29 were in Sub-Saharan Africa. While it is true that in other metrics, such as presidential diplomacy, the MENA indeed rose to preeminence, it was actually the region that grew the least in terms of diplomatic presence.

This focus on Africa reveals an unexpected similarity in the diplomatic agendas of the two emerging powers. It is noteworthy that Brazil and Turkey's diplomatic expansions, particularly under Lula and Erdogan, took on the shades of South-South dialogue, which meant a new and more relevant role for countries outside the Western circuit. Brazil's approximation with the African continent could be seen in a number of domains: active presidential diplomacy, a rise in development cooperation and other aid gestures – particularly with Lusophone Africa – (Mendonça Júnior & Faria 2015; Lima 2017), revival of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation in the South Atlantic (ZOPACAS) (Abdenur, Mattheis & Seabra 2016; Seabra 2017), and discursive attempts to build a symbolic bridge between Brazil and Africa as “kin nations”, sharing common history, culture and ethnic ties (Mesquita & Medeiros 2016).

As for Turkey, given that most of the debate on the previous decade was centered on its shift towards the MENA, little attention was devoted to its African diplomacy, apart from some recent studies on individual countries (Kadayifci-Orellana 2016). Through the RPDN data, it is possible to visualize how significant this African expansion was and to compare it with other *foci* of diplomatic attention.

Conclusion

With this article, we presented the RPDN dataset, its motivation, features and some examples of usage. This contribution is relevant as it fills an important gap concerning data availability for emerging countries. We believe RPDN provides valuable resources for researchers interested in empirical, longitudinal analysis of Brazilian and Turkish foreign policy. As a concluding remark, we would like to point out that, through RPDN, we do not seek to advance methodological monism or advocate any intrinsic superiority of large N research designs. Our chief concern is rather to enable a broadening in the type of research which can be conducted on emerging countries – an endeavor for which quantitative data is required.

Our brief demonstration indicated how such data can address several research problems not yet answered in the literature. By combining measures of presidential diplomacy and diplomatic presence for Brazil and Turkey, we assessed to what extent those countries prioritized their immediate regions. It was possible

to verify that Brasilia indeed privileged South America in all domains, albeit at declining rates, whereas Ankara's turn towards the MENA was impressive but brief and restricted chiefly to presidential diplomacy. The data also revealed how Brazil and Turkey displayed a similar interest in strengthening their presences in Africa – a finding which warrants further research.

Our example was merely an initial illustration of the usefulness of RPDN and how it can be utilized by the research community. Its datasets contain information on many other items pertaining to diplomacy, so that we are confident that a wide range of other research questions can be addressed through RPDN.

Nonetheless, as discussed throughout the article, the datasets still suffer from limitations. Most notably, not all empirical indicators were available for all countries and all years. Likewise, some of the variables were liable to biases and omissions due to idiosyncrasies of the information source. Additionally, Brazil and Turkey should be regarded as starting points of a greater academic enterprise. Hence, there remains significant room for improvement in future versions of RPDN with regards to data validity and quality, as well as number of countries included.

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Bio

Rafael Mesquita is an Assistant Professor of International Relations at the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE) and an Associate Research Fellow at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA) at the Research Program "Power and Ideas". His research focuses on regional powers and Brazilian foreign policy.

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